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/>S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 04 MADRID 000614

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PASS TO MARC FREY, DAVE GORDNER, KIKO CORTI, MIKE

SCARDAVILLE OF DHS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/25/2024

TAGS: [ASEC](#) [CASC](#) [NI](#) [PTER](#)

SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR DHS. SEC. NAPOLITANO'S JULY 1

MEETINGS IN MADRID

REF: A. MADRID 551

[1](#)B. MADRID 604

[1](#)C. SECSTATE 56239

[1](#)D. MADRID 440

[1](#)E. MADRID 71

[1](#)F. MADRID 612

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Classified By: Charge D'Affaires Arnold A. Chacon for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C//NF) Madam Secretary, Embassy Madrid warmly welcomes your visit, which comes on the heels of your June 24 meeting with Spanish Interior Minister Alfredo Perez Rubalcaba in Washington (Ref A). While one of the highlights of his trip was signing the bilateral accord on Preventing and Combating Serious Crime, one of the centerpieces of your Madrid trip will be to sign an MOU to formalize the DHS Immigration Advisory Program (IAP) at Madrid's Barajas Airport and a declaration of intent for our two governments to work toward concluding an agreement on Cooperation in Science & Technology for Homeland Security Matters. You will hold meetings with President Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, his Second Vice President, Elena Salgado, who also serves as Minister of Economy and Finance, and Interior Minister Rubalcaba. The Embassy also will co-host a reception in your honor, which will give you and your delegation an opportunity to meet a range of additional senior-level officials in the Spanish Government. Your visit will help to highlight the importance that the USG places on the overall bilateral relationship and the numerous programs that the DHS is working on with our Spanish hosts. While the focus of your

trip will be on discussing bilateral issues, your interlocutors may express GOS interest in preliminary discussions to increase collaboration on justice and home affairs issues during Spain's upcoming stint as President of the European Union (EU) during the first half of 2010.

//US-SPAIN RELATIONS//

12. (C//NF) U.S.-Spain relations are strong and based on shared global interests. Spain is a valued US partner and an important geostrategic player that has achieved a remarkable transformation since the end of the Franco dictatorship 30 years ago. It is one of the leading democracies in Europe, and has the ninth-largest economy in the world. Spain is an important friend and ally, and we value its cooperation against terrorism and a range of other security issues. Since the U.S. presidential election in November, a strong atmosphere of goodwill has emerged in Spain for closer bilateral cooperation. As a gesture of this goodwill, the GOS presently is considering accepting some of the detainees currently held at Guantanamo (GTMO, see Ref B). In Washington, Rubalcaba publicly stated that Spain may accept as many as five detainees. Spain is an important NATO ally, a key player in the EU, and during January-June 2010 will hold the EU's rotating Presidency. XXXXXXXXXXXX. One recent irritant in bilateral relationship is are the efforts by some investigating judges - invoking "universal jurisdiction" - to indict former USG officials for their allegedly involvement in torture at GTMO (Ref D).

13. (SBU) Your visit to Madrid and Rubalcaba's visit to Washington are but the latest in a series of high-level exchanges, including a presidential bilateral on the margins of the U.S.-EU Summit in Prague in April, a meeting between National Security Adviser Gen. Jones and King Juan Carlos I in Florida in February, and Foreign Minister Moratinos's February meeting in Washington with Secretary Clinton. At the end of May, U.S. Transportation Secretary LaHood became the first cabinet-level visitor to Spain on behalf of the Obama Administration. While you are in Madrid, Defense Minister Carme Chacon will be in Washington during June 30 - July 2 for discussions with Secretary Gates, among other meetings (Ref E).

//THE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT//

14. (SBU) In office since 2004, Zapatero won reelection to a second term in March 2008, but his center-left Spanish

Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) is seven seats shy of a majority in the 350-seat Congress. More than a year of worse-than-expected economic news has led to widespread criticism of Zapatero and his economic policymakers for having downplayed the economic difficulties and being unable to turn the economy around. Unemployment is over 17%, the highest rate in the EU, and it is expected to reach 20% sometime in the next year. Although popularity ratings for Zapatero and the Socialists are low, the conservative opposition Popular Party (PP) has struggled to capitalize on this. The PP, hampered by internal divisions, also has been dogged by corruption accusations. Nevertheless, Zapatero suffered his first serious political reverse since winning reelection when his party lost power in March 2009 regional elections in Galicia. Zapatero shuffled the cabinet April 7 as a response to criticism of the GOS' inability to resolve the economic crisis and with an eye to the June European Parliament elections. The most prominent change was the replacement of the Second Vice President/Minister of Economy and Finance. Even so, the PP secured more seats than the Socialists in the June 7 European Parliament elections, another sign that Zapatero needs to focus on the economic situation.

//YOUR MEETINGS//

15. (S//NF) You will meet Zapatero, becoming the second Administration official to see him in Madrid after the late May visit of Transportation Secretary LaHood. In making decisions and formulating policy, President Zapatero plays to his domestic audience. Zapatero, who is heading his second minority government, is constantly fighting for the support of the 1-2 million swing voters and traditional non-voters. All options are always on the table in order to achieve his immediate political goals. Zapatero is not a "conviction" politician but undoubtedly understands the Spanish people and he will support whatever policy appeals to them. However, Zapatero also proven himself amenable to working with us on issues of particular importance to the USG despite internal opposition. He may even take credit, as in the case of adjustments in U.S.-Cuba policy, for shaping USG views. He is not innately ill-disposed to the USG. For him, foreign policy is subordinate to domestic political interests, and the U.S. relationship is just one more element to be viewed according to the circumstances of the moment. There is

currently a wave of goodwill for President Obama in Spain, which is the answer to Zapatero's prayers in that it enables him to engage the USG without being dinged by the traditional anti-U.S. sentiment among his socialist base. As detailed in Ref E, Post believes the best way to interact with Zapatero in meetings is to be ready for some pleasant and relaxed initial banter. Post advises that you ask him open-ended questions and allow him to talk about what's on his mind. Zapatero will be well prepared on substance. Zapatero welcomes dialogue and an exchange of ideas. Give him room and he will listen to your ideas. Any political differences are best discussed behind closed doors. Zapatero does not speak English, though we think he may understand it.

16. (C/NF) You will recall Interior Minister Rubalcaba - who has wide-ranging responsibilities on security, law enforcement and intelligence issues - as very capable and serious but also charming. A career politician, Rubalcaba is arguably the most impressive member of Spanish President Zapatero's cabinet and a very useful and powerful ally to have in the Zapatero Administration. His influence exceeds the formal parameters of his Ministry. He is known for his intelligence, discretion, hard work, and mastery of detail, as well as his negotiating prowess. He is one of two or three individuals whom Zapatero often consults before making big decisions, and not only on issues within Rubalcaba's portfolio. Rubalcaba excels at putting out fires and is a valued contact of the Embassy, which finds him accessible and effective in getting things done for us despite his busy portfolio. You and Minister Rubalcaba are scheduled to sign an MOU formalizing ongoing cooperation on the DHS's Immigration Advisory Program (IAP) at Madrid's Barajas Airport, where a successful pilot program recently was carried out. You are also scheduled to sign a declaration of intent for our two governments to work toward concluding an agreement on Cooperation in Science & Technology for Homeland Security Matters. Rubalcaba also is likely to continue his Washington discussions with you on the US-EU transatlantic agenda, border control issues, CSI, document falsification, money laundering, and an alert system in case of the theft of arms or explosives for terrorist purposes. He may discuss further his recent proposal for an exchange of liaison personnel to have officials present in each others' headquarters. In addition to the preceding topics, you may also wish to raise trafficking in persons, illegal immigration, Frontex issues, and Special Interest Alien Smuggling through Madrid-Barajas Airport en route to the

United States. Rubalcaba speaks English but prefers to have an interpreter present during discussions of some technical aspects of his portfolio.

17. (C) Serious, hard-working, able and ambitious, Elena Salgado is the Second Vice President and Minister of Economy and Finance. She was moved up from being Minister of Public Administration in April, as part of the broader cabinet shuffle intended to highlight an intensified GOS effort to combat the impact of the global economic crisis on Spain. Rubalcaba reportedly was an influential figure in supporting her appointment. Zapatero reportedly values Salgado for her depth of experience administering government ministries, although some critics at the time of her appointment suggested she is better known as a Zapatero loyalist than for her economic credentials. She previously served as Minister of Public Administration (2007-09) and Minister of Health (2004-07). The Spanish Government in 2006 unsuccessfully nominated Salgado as a candidate for the Presidency of the World Health Organization. Salgado also has extensive private sector experience in consulting and telecommunications industries. Salgado, born in 1949, has degrees in industrial engineering and economics. Salgado would be an appropriate GOS official with whom to discuss CSI, money laundering and bulk-cash smuggling, and the USG's

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relationship with Spanish Customs. Salgado speaks English.
CHACON